



## **Chief Operations Officer (COO)**

*Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF)*

**Location:** Nashville, TN (Hybrid)

**Reports To:** President & CEO

**Supervises:** Operations and Program Teams

**Status:** Full-Time, Exempt

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### **About GELF**

Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF) equips Tennessee's children with books and resources, supporting children birth through third grade and empowering families, educators, and communities to foster a lifelong love of reading. We believe literacy is the foundation for a lifetime of opportunity.

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### **Position Summary**

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) is a key member of the senior leadership team, responsible for translating GELF's vision into action by overseeing the operational, programmatic, and administrative functions of the organization. This individual must be a collaborative, results-driven leader who excels in operational systems, strategic execution, and team development, while actively contributing to a culture rooted in purpose, presence, and people-first leadership.

The COO will serve as a thought partner to the CEO and help sustain and grow GELF's impact by ensuring that day-to-day operations, program implementation, and organizational structures are efficient, scalable, and mission aligned.

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### **About the Role**

We are seeking a dynamic, strategic, and mission-driven Chief Operating Officer to join our leadership team. This is not a behind-the-scenes role—it's a front-line opportunity to build the systems, teams, and structures that make bold ideas real. You'll partner directly with the CEO to lead operational execution, steward our culture, and bring vision to life through alignment, clarity, and strategic action.

### **Who You Are**

- **A builder and integrator:** You bring visionary ideas to life through structure, systems, and discipline.
- **A mission-driven leader:** You care deeply about early literacy, educational access, and serving communities with heart.



- **A culture steward:** You believe people are the heartbeat of the organization and know how to align teams with purpose.
- **A trusted partner:** You thrive as a #2 leader, empowering visionary leadership with strong operational grounding.

## **Key Responsibilities**

### **Organizational Leadership & Culture**

- Serve as a key leader and culture carrier, fostering a high-performing, inclusive, and values-driven workplace.
- Collaborate with the CEO and leadership team on strategic planning and decision-making.
- Champion organizational clarity, cohesion, and healthy team dynamics.

### **Operations Management**

- Oversee and optimize day-to-day operations, including finance, HR, IT, compliance, and office management (in partnership with external vendors where applicable).
- Develop and implement systems, policies, and processes that promote efficiency, accountability, and transparency.
- Ensure the organization has the infrastructure to support growth, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

### **Program Oversight**

- Lead and support program teams in delivering high-quality, high-impact literacy programs statewide.
- Ensure consistent, measurable program implementation aligned with GELF's strategic goals.
- Promote continuous learning, improvement, and innovation in all program areas.

### **Team Leadership**

- Coach, develop, and empower team leaders to ensure alignment, capacity, and accountability.
- Strengthen internal communication, collaboration, and performance management practices.
- Serve as a connector across departments to break down silos and promote cross-functional integration.

### **Strategic Implementation**

- Translate strategic goals into operational plans and priorities.
- Track key performance indicators and outcomes; ensure data is used to drive decisions.



- Partner with the CEO to prepare board materials, manage organizational risk, and represent GELF externally as needed.
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### **Qualifications & Experience**

- Proven senior leadership experience (8+ years), ideally as a COO, VP of Operations, or similar role in a nonprofit, philanthropic, or mission-driven organization.
  - Demonstrated success building and managing operational systems and leading high-performing teams. Salesforce experience is a plus.
  - Strong strategic thinking, problem-solving, and execution skills.
  - Deep alignment with GELF's mission to strengthen early literacy in Tennessee.
  - Excellent interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills.
  - Experience with change management and scaling impact across a statewide or multi-site initiative is highly desirable.
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### **Ideal Candidate Attributes**

- A dynamic, thoughtful leader who thrives in a collaborative and evolving environment.
  - Brings both head and heart to the role—operational acumen combined with cultural and emotional intelligence.
  - Proactive, responsive, and grounded in humility and service.
  - Familiarity with conscious leadership principles and practice (*15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership*)
  - Embodies GELF's core values: boldness, openness, optimism, knowledge, and stewardship.
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### **Compensation & Benefits**

- Salary range: \$165,000-180,000 based on experience
- Comprehensive benefits package, including health, dental, and vision insurance, generous PTO, professional development support, and participation in the TCRS pension program.

### **Comprehensive Benefits Package:**

- Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance
- Life Insurance



- TN Consolidated Retirement (Employer Contribution)
- 401K / 457B
- State Holidays and generous PTO
- Professional development
- Supportive team culture
- Purposeful work

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### **To Apply (READ CAREFULLY)**

Please follow these steps to apply:

1. go to this [LINK](#) and complete the Predictive Index assessment.
2. Once assessment completed, submit a 30-60 second video about why you are the right person for the role to the email below.
3. Send your resume and a thoughtful cover letter outlining your interest and relevant experience to [james.pond@tn.gov](mailto:james.pond@tn.gov) .
4. Short-listed candidates will be asked to take an Enneagram assessment before final interviews.

NOTE: The desired hire date is flexible depending upon current employment expectations for notice and turnover.